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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
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Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of November 18 and your supportive comments regarding Secretary Baker's trip to Beijing last month. The Secretary very much appreciates the interest with which you followed the trip.

The President and the Secretary fully share your concerns regarding China's commitment to international standards on ballistic missiles and missile technology transfers. The Secretary believes we made significant progress on this question during his visit to Beijing. The Chinese have now told us they intend to observe guidelines and parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). They have specifically agreed that this will cover any transfers of the M-9 and M-11 missiles and related technology and will include transfers to Syria, Pakistan, and Iran.

During the Beijing meetings, the two sides carefully reviewed international standards on missile transfers. The Secretary made clear that the MTCR Guidelines include detailed provisions for control of exports of technology and components, as well as controls on missiles exceeding certain parameters. The Chinese commitment to observe these standards is quite clear.

In return for their decision, the Chinese have requested that we lift the missile sanctions against China which the Administration announced in June. Once we receive China's diplomatic confirmation of the substance of the talks in Beijing, we expect to take the steps necessary to lift the sanctions. With China's commitments, these sanctions will have served their purpose and helped realize an important success for U.S. foreign policy.

The Administration's action will not, of course, make China immune from future sanctions: we have informed Beijing that sanctions which the Senate worked hard to pass will be fully implemented if the PRC enters into new transfers which would be inconsistent with the MTCR and would trigger applicable provisions of U.S. law. We are hopeful, however, that our continuing efforts to keep the pressure on China will remove the need for such action.

The Honorable
Claiborne Pell, Chairman,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate

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You stated in your letter that China's compliance with MTCR standards would mark a significant advancement in one of the most contentious areas of the bilateral relationship. The Administration fully agrees. We have made this a major objective of our diplomatic efforts with China. U.S.-China agreement on Beijing's most recent assurances will make an important contribution to international stability, peace, and security, significantly reducing the threat of an arms race involving some of the most destabilizing weapons.

Sincerely,



Janet G. Mullins
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs